



**SEIUHealthcare.**  
United for Quality Care

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Before the Aging Committee

**In Support of HB 5194 AN ACT CONCERNING REGISTRATION OF TEMPORARY NURSING SERVICES AGENCIES.**

Good Afternoon Senator Miller, Representative Garibay, and Members of the Committee. My name is Yvonne Foster and I am a Certified Nurse's Aide (CNA) at Windsor Health and Rehabilitation. My testimony today is in support of creating a staffing agency registry in the State of Connecticut.

Staffing has been an issue within the nursing homes for many years even before the pandemic began. My facility is using agency healthcare workers to keep our building staffed, we have agency CNAs that are scheduled at our facility on a regular daily basis. While staffing agency staff have helped us keep our facility afloat during these tough times, there are issues with the use of staffing agencies.

The use of the staffing agencies has created a situation where we cannot recruit staff, because the staffing agencies offer higher wages. As someone who has fought for my coworkers and I to receive a livable wage, I am all for healthcare workers being paid a high wage. The problem is staffing agency staff do not receive full time hours or quality benefits, and so they are trading hourly high wages for stability and benefits. A side effect of this is that it hinders progress in this field. My co-workers and I are currently in contract negotiations and our employer has not offered us anywhere near what other facilities are paying their staff, never mind agency staffing wages. My facility chooses to spend their money on agency staff, instead of spending this money to improve the working conditions and benefits of existing permanent staff. My employer is not willing to invest in her current workers.

The financial data reporting requirements of this bill are very important to myself, my coworkers, and my Union. Information on agency workers fees and the percentage of fees retained by agencies after salaries would be helpful in understanding what is happening in staffing agencies. At Windsor Rehab there are more agency nurses than we have workers on our payroll. This proves that the boss would rather pay for fly by night staff than those like me who have given our lives to the service of these residents.

I have spent 20 Years of my life caring for the residents of Windsor Rehab, through multiple employers, through good and bad times. Our residents can rely on us as a stable part of their life.

It is this unmeasurable quality of care that my coworkers and I provide that is not valued by the nursing home industry's boss. Agency staff are a necessary part of our world and the requirements of this bill will help provide equity for all long-term care workers. Staffing agency staff are not able to give the level of care that permanent workers can give due to their lack of familiarity with residents. Permanent staff know the residents and understand their needs. We know who likes to go to bed at a certain time. My coworkers and I know our residents like family. Giving the most intimate care to them for years. The requirements of this bill will inform the Department of Social Services, the families of the residents, and workers like myself about what is really happening in this industry.

I want to thank this committee for recognizing that the use of staffing agency staff is problematic and creates a barrier to truly fixing the staffing crisis in nursing homes. This bill will be a step towards addressing these issues. I hope that we can bring HB 5194 into law.

Thank you for your time.